



FAMILY VALUES IN NETHERLAND

Compiled by: Nenni Kurniawati

Map



About Netherland

- The largest town, Amsterdam, exceeds 740,000 inhabitants (in 2005)
- a concentration of inhabitants in the triangle formed by UTRECHT-AMSTERDAM-ROTTERDAM
- **Location:** Western Europe, bordering Belgium 450 km, Germany 577 km

- **Capital:** Amsterdam
- **Population:** 16,318,199 (July 2004 est.)

- **Ethnic Make-up:** Dutch 83%, other 17% (of which 9% are non-Western origin mainly Turks, Moroccans, Antilleans, Surinamese and Indonesians) (1999 est.)

About Netherland

- **Religions:** Roman Catholic 31%, Protestant 21%, Muslim 4.4%, other 3.6%, unaffiliated 40%
- **Language:** Dutch, the official language (spoken by around 90% of the population)
- Around 350,000 people, or 2.2% of the population, speak Frisian as their first language, mainly in the northern province of Friesland, where it is recognised as an official language.
- Turkish and Arabic are also spoken in the Netherlands, each by over 0.6% of the population.

Buildings



PROVINCE INHABITANTS

Groningen	574,300
Friesland	642,000
Drenthe	482,400
Overijssel	1,105,500
Flevoland	360,000
Gelderland	1,967,000
Utrecht	1,162,200
North Holland	2,587,200
South Holland	3,451,900
Zeeland	379,000
North Brabant	2,406,900
Limburg	1,139,335

(Inhabitants per province as of December 2004)



Family Structure

- a married couple with children
- Family:
 1. Gezin (nuclear family)
 2. Familie (extended family: including one another legally (e.g. by marriage) all those related to biologically and
- The children are raised in safe surroundings
- Parents provided everything children need in the course of becoming an adult

Relationship

- the members of a “gezin” have a looser relationship with the rest of the “familie” compared to most of the other European societies.
- Ties loosen further and faster than in other European societies, especially when a member get married
- the “gezin” has economically been a very independent group

Family's characteristic

- Problems are discussed and solved together and a home is provided for all by all
- Children are raised exclusively by the parents; other members of the family are not involved
- The Dutch see the family as the foundation of the social structure
- Families tend to be small, often with only one or two children
- Relatively few women work outside the house full-time as compared to many other cultures.
The Dutch consider their pet a full member of the “gezin” rather than an animal “just for fun”
- As the society can be characterized as individualistic, many prefer to run a one-person household. The number of children per couple is low.

Celebration

- The most important day: birthday.
- The most valuable presents of the year are received on this occasion, and it is a common custom to invite family and friends to a party
- Other celebration: graduation, weddings, wedding anniversaries, anniversaries at work
- The cycle of anniversaries in the Netherlands is 12½ (copper), 25 (silver), 50 (golden) and 60 (diamond)

Daily Routine

- Economic activities: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (Monday- Friday)
- A school day: generally ends at 3:00 p.m.
- Dinner: between 5:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.
- The evening is spent on a combination of resting, sports and fulfilling obligations for school or work.
- The role of the computer (Internet) and television are quite important
- The number of families with an Internet connection and the number of television sets per family are among the highest in the world.
- The Netherlands are asleep between 12 midnight and 7:00 a.m.
- Visiting friends or relatives, shopping, sporting, resting and spending time on hobbies are the common things to do.

Children

- Children considered to be “the centre of all activities”
- child-rearing is a major activity
- Many parents also want their children to be active in sports
- In most families, both parents have a job
- Small children spend several days a week in a day nursery (kinderopvang)



Children

- The government pays a general child allowance to parents which is not income-based
- Allowance ends at when the child reaches the age of 18

Education System

- **Children must attend school from their 5th birthday until the end of the year of their 16th birthday.**

Obtaining a diploma

- If a child reaches the age of 16 and has not obtained a diploma, they must train for a qualification (*kwalificatieplicht*).

Truant officers

- The municipality (*gemeente*) employs school attendance officers (*leerplichtambtenaren*) to check whether children are going to school.

Education System

Exemptions

- * Only in exceptional situations can a child be temporarily exempted from compulsory education, e.g. if your profession makes it impossible for you to be free during the school holidays.
- * Under other special circumstances, a child may also obtain leave-of-absence from their compulsory education. This is for a maximum of ten days.

Education System

Compulsory attendance

- * If parents consciously allow their children to miss school, they can be prosecuted. Parents and young people over the age of twelve can be fined, receive a study order (*leerstraf*), or, in extreme circumstances, be jailed. In the case of 'luxury absence' (*luxeverzuim*) (extra holiday during school time without permission) there is a very good chance of an official report being made.

Ways of Thinking

- the Netherlands has always had a very open society with a strong focus on international economics
- The set of standards and values is based on the Ten Commandments from the Bible
- The economic circumstances throughout the recent decades and even centuries and the political developments influence the national character as well
- “GOING DUTCH” is an internationally famous expression

Ways of Thinking

- Pragmatism when it comes to economics is a national trademark
- There is a general kind of sense that “everyone should have the same”
- Dutch dislike displays of wealth, as they run counter to their egalitarian beliefs.:
“as soon as you rise above ground level, your head is chopped off”
- Dutch do not boast about their accomplishments or their material possessions
- The differences between classes are not expressed explicitly by showing off material possessions

Ways of Thinking

- In general, the business attitude is very proper; promises made are kept, deadlines met and problems solved in a no-nonsense way
- Economic benefit drives Dutch businesses

Personal Relationship

- personal relations as a basis for partnership are less important than in many other cultures
- Personal quarrels are solved as easily as they are started
- Revenge is not a Dutch characteristic; “forgive and forget” is the norm

Social Relations

- In general, the Dutch have many friends. They make friends with their neighbours, colleagues and people they meet through sports activities
- A bunch of flowers or a box of chocolates is customary
- The Dutch do drink a lot of coffee, 6 or more cups for an adult a day is no exception, and regard this as a resting point

Etiquette

- In the Dutch language, there are two forms of the word “you”:
- “jij” for friends and close acquaintances, or children, and
- “u” for strangers or people not close to one, and for children towards adults (or toward people in authority).

Polite Gestures

- Dutch people live by the clock; appointments are honoured on time. Being late : impoliteness or lack of interest, an insult
- The ceremonies of greeting include verbal salutations, shaking hands and/or three (!!!)
- The handshake is the common form of greeting. (firm and swift, accompanied by a smile, and repetition of your name.)
- Shake hands with everyone individually including children.
- Very close friends may greet each other by air kissing near the cheek three times, starting with the left cheek.
- Most Dutch only use first names with family and close friends.
- Wait until invited before moving to a first-name basis
- Men do not kiss each other; neither do business partners.